Ministry of
Children and Family Development

2015/16 – 2017/18
SERVICE PLAN

February 2015

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Published by the Ministry of Children and Family Development

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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

I am honoured to present the 2015/16 – 2017/18 Service Plan for the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development 2015/16 – 2017/18 Service Plan was prepared under my direction, in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*.

I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

The Honourable Stephanie Cadieux
Minister of Children and Family Development
February 17, 2015

Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry works together with Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, Aboriginal service partners and approximately 5400 contracted community social service agencies and foster homes, cross government and social sector partners to deliver inclusive, culturally respectful, responsive and accessible services that support the well-being of children, youth and families. The primary focus is to support vulnerable children and their families using a client-centred approach to service delivery that builds on the family's existing resources and capacities. Services are delivered in a respectful, compassionate, strengths-based and culturally appropriate manner to achieve meaningful outcomes.

Ministry services are complementary and families may access a combination of services delivered through: Early Years Services; Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs; Child and Youth Mental Health Services; Child Safety, Family Support and Children in Care Services; Adoption Services and Youth Justice Services. Ministry programs and services are coordinated through a provincial office located in Victoria and are delivered through 13 geographic Service Delivery Areas. For information on specific programs and services, visit the Ministry of Children and Family Development internet site.

Strategic Direction and Context

Strategic Direction

Over the past few years, the ministry's focus on strategic priorities and key actions aimed at improving services to children, youth and families have provided a strong foundation, a well-defined structure and a clearer sense of direction. MCFD continues to support government priorities, like the Early Years Strategy and Violence Free BC initiative, while making strategic and manageable changes to support practice and to make a difference for children, youth and families within a challenging context of fiscal realities and changing demographics.

The Minister's Mandate Letter speaks to Government's priorities – including a balanced budget, the Early Years Strategy, accessible and effective services for children, youth and families, and regular meetings with the Representative for Children and Youth – and a commitment to continuously improve our social programs to ensure that children and families have the opportunities they need to be successful. MLA Jane Thornthwaite is supporting the Minister as her newly appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Child Mental Health and Anti-Bullying.

Government's commitment to an accountable and cost consciousness culture, as outlined in the Taxpayer Accountability Principles, is reflected throughout this three year plan, which focuses on working together to explore new, more efficient and effective ways of providing programs and services that better meet the needs of children, youth and families that we serve.

Strategic Context

The Economic Forecast Council expects British Columbia's real GDP to grow by 2.6 per cent in 2015 and 2.8 per cent in 2016. Downside risks to BC's economic outlook include the potential for a slowdown in domestic and US activity, ongoing fragility in Europe, and slower than anticipated Asian demand. Additional risks include a fluctuating Canadian dollar and weak inflation, in part due to lower oil prices.

In response to this challenging economic environment, the Government of BC remains committed to controlled spending and the implementation of initiatives to support a leaner and more efficient organization.

The ministry is supporting Government's overall fiscal discipline through effective budget management, undertaking process improvement activities as part of the cross-government Lean initiative and clarifying and prioritizing its strategic work. This repositioning and efficient use of our services supports our goal to make the best use of our resources.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

This service plan is aligned with the priorities of the ministry's new 2015/16 – 2017/18 Strategic Plan. Nine performance measures appear in this Service Plan, however, many other performance indicators are tracked and are publicly available through the ministry's Performance Management Report.

Goal 1: Achieve permanency for children and youth in care and support transitions to adulthood

Objective 1.1: Children and youth in care will have a culturally meaningful and legally permanent relationship with a caring adult

Children and youth require a stable and continuous relationship with a nurturing person to help them grow into healthy, responsible and successful adults. As part of the renewed focus on permanency for children and youth in care, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Develop policy to support and strengthen permanency practice
- Deliver permanency training to implement policy
- Increase permanency placements for children and youth, including adoptions and out of care placements (under s.54.1 and s.54.01 of the *CFCSA*)
- Engage Aboriginal people on developing permanency options for Aboriginal children and youth

Performance Measure 1: Children and youth placed for adoption

Performance Measure	2011/12 Baseline	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Forecast	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Percent of children and youth with adoption plans who have been placed	12.3%	16.1%	21.5%	22.5%	23.3%	23.7%

Data Source: Adoption Management System

Discussion

This measure shows the number of children who are placed for adoption within the fiscal year as a percentage of all the children in care who have a plan for adoption. While a plan for adoption is developed once it is decided that adoption is the best long term plan for a child in care, placement occurs when a child first moves in with prospective adoptive parents. An adoption order is only granted once all legal issues are addressed and a successful six month placement has occurred.

Performance Measure 2: Children whose grade is appropriate for their age

Performance Measure	2010/11 Baseline	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Forecast	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Percent of children in care whose grade level is appropriate for their age	80.2%	83.5%	84.2%	84.9%	85.8%	86.7%

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, ICM, and Ministry of Education enrolment data.

Discussion

Educational attainment is an excellent barometer of the overall well-being of children. Additional physical and developmental challenges and experiences of trauma that vulnerable children and youth face, result in their being less likely in their adolescence to progress in school. The proportion of children and youth in care whose grade level is appropriate for their age is a good measure of whether the system of support for children in care ameliorates the impact of these additional vulnerabilities.

This new measure – which has expanded to include all children in care as opposed to only children in continuing custody – is the percent of children in care and in school, who are at most five years older than their grade. For example, a child six years of age before the end of December is typically in grade one.

Objective 1.2: Youth and young adults are prepared for adulthood

For those youth who do not find legal permanency, the ministry's focus will be on improving their ability to lead a full and complete life. To support their successful transition to adulthood, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Enhance planning and preparation for youth transitions
- Establish the Provincial Director's Youth Advisory Council
- Explore extending the availability of post-majority services and supports by two years
- Map & coordinate services for youth to understand the current state and identify gaps in service

Performance Measure 3: Youth Grade 12 Educational Attainment

Performance Measure	2013/14 Baseline	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Forecast	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Percent of youth in care who turn 19 with a high school credential	47.4%	47.4%	48.4%	49.4%	50.4%	51.4%

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, ICM, and Ministry of Education enrolment data.

Discussion

Education is a key determinant of long term well-being and social inclusion. The proportion of youth in care who graduate by age 19 and at an age appropriate level is a good measure of whether the

system of support for youth in care is working and contributing to their success. This new measure includes all youth in care by court order under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*.

Goal 2: Standardize and improve ministry services

Objective 2.1: Implement the Early Years Strategy to better support families with young children.

The Provincial Office for the Early Years monitors the implementation of the Early Years Strategy, which is focused on the goals of improved accessibility, affordability, quality and coordination. To support the implementation of early years initiatives, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Expand the network of Early Years Centres
- Build awareness of and provide information about the new BC Early Childhood Tax Benefit
- Redesign web-based information related to early years programs and services
- Fund the creation of up to 1000 new licensed child care spaces to improve child care availability
- Create an online Child Care Registry to assist parents in identifying and registering for available licensed child care in their communities
- In consultation with sector partners, develop entry level competencies and an educational institution curriculum guide for Early Childhood Educators in BC

Performance Measure 4: Licensed child care spaces

Performance Measure	2013/14 Baseline	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Forecast	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Number of licensed child care spaces	98,463	98,463	100,000	102,000	104,000	106,000

Data Source: Child Care Operating Funding Program Datamart

Discussion

This new performance measure speaks to the average monthly number of licensed spaces approved for funding through the Child Care Operating Funding Program. Increasing the number of child care spaces across BC is an objective of the Early Years Strategy. This year the ministry will also fund the creation of 1000 new licensed child care spaces under the Child Care Capital Funding Program.

Objective 2.2: Strengthen coordination and collaboration of services and supports to families affected by domestic violence.

To support coordination, strengthen services and improve the effectiveness of the systemic response for families affected by domestic violence, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Monitor the three-year Provincial Domestic Violence Plan
- In partnership with Ministry of Health, expand the Safe Relationships, Safe Children Project implementation, inclusive of Aboriginal communities
- Strengthen Domestic Violence Practice through practice guidelines, training and providing social workers access to the Protection Order Registry to improve timely safety planning
- Provide support for provincial Domestic Violence Units

Objective 2.3: Improve consistency and accessibility of Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN).

The ministry supports families to access services and programs and will improve cross-sectoral coordination for new and existing programs. Over the next 3 years MCFD will:

Strategies

- Define and ensure consistency of CYSN services
- Form a cross-ministerial working group with Health and Education to review the effectiveness and coordination of the provision of autism services for children and youth in BC

Objective 2.4: Improve consistency and accessibility of Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) Services.

To better address the demand for child and youth mental health services, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Evaluate the CYMH Intake Clinic model and expand to remaining CYMH intake locations in BC
- Define mandate and services for child and youth mental health community based teams
- Expand the use of tele-mental health to improve access to a variety of services and supports, particularly in rural and remote communities

Performance Measure 5: Tele-mental health sessions

Performance Measure	2011/12 Baseline	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Forecast	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Total number of tele-mental health sessions	24	157	275	300	325	350

Data Source: BC Children's Hospital

Discussion

Tele-mental health sessions increase access to psychiatric consultation closer to home for children and youth living in rural and remote areas through direct clinical tele-health consultations with psychiatrists located at BC Children's Hospital in Vancouver. This measure is an indicator of the growth of tele-health practice.

Objective 2.5: Improve consistency and accessibility of Child Safety, Family Support and Children in Care Services.

To support families to build upon their inherent strengths and increase their capacity to safely care for their children, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Ensure the use of the most appropriate response within the Child Protection Response Model

Performance Measure 6: Ratio of FDR to Investigation

Performance Measure	2011/12 Baseline	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Forecast	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Ratio of Family Development Responses to Investigations	0.46	3.0	4.0	5.0	5.5	6.0

Data Source: Integrated Case Management System

Discussion

Family Development Response (FDR) is the preferred response to investigation, as it focuses on keeping a child safe while living in the family home and works to address safety issues by building on the family's strengths and support system. This performance measure compares the use of FDR to the use of investigations. The ratio rises as the use of FDR increases and the use of investigations decreases. For example, a ratio of 5.0 means that five times more FDRs were completed than investigations.

Objective 2.6: Improve and strengthen Aboriginal Services.

In order to support Aboriginal families and reduce the number of Aboriginal children coming into care the ministry will:

Strategies

- Implement the Aboriginal Policy and Practice Framework
- Expand cultural competency training, including online training, experiential learning and mentorship to infuse cultural competency into ministry operations
- Continue the Aboriginal Service Innovations – Early Years contracts for direct early years services for Aboriginal children aged 0-6 years
- Through the Aboriginal Service Innovations – Child Safety and Permanence program, provide direct services to support aboriginal children safely returning home or to their community and for those children who can't safely return, improve permanency outcomes

Performance Measure 7: Aboriginal children cared for in Aboriginal communities

Performance Measure	2008/09 Baseline	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Forecast	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Of the Aboriginal children having to leave their parental home, the percent that receive services delivered by Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, Aboriginal foster care providers or Aboriginal friends and family	53.2%	63.4%	63.4%	64.0%	64.5%	65.0%

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, Integrated Case Management System, and Resource and Payment System.

Discussion

Aboriginal children are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system. Ensuring that Aboriginal children who have to leave their parental home receive services through an Aboriginal service system will strongly connect them to their culture and traditions. This measure is the proportion of those children who are being served by Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, or are receiving ministry services delivered by Aboriginal foster care providers or Aboriginal friends and family.

Objective 2.7: Standardize contract management and procurement processes.

To establish a more coherent, efficient and streamlined procurement and contract management practice, process and contracted service delivery approach the ministry will:

Strategies

- Complete an analysis of options to improve contract management and procurement processes
- Launch the Contract Flexibility and Efficiency pilot with four large agencies which together provide services across the province
- Evaluate the pilot based on increased effectiveness and efficiency and expand to other agencies where opportunities exist

Objective 2.8: Redesign ministry services to ensure staff can focus on the needs of families in their communities.

To address workload issues for front line staff and to better serve ministry clients, MCFD will:

Strategies

- Design and implement a centralized, provincial screening and intake for Child Protection services
- Plan and design a new Service Delivery approach to address workload issues

Objective 2.9: Expand practice audits to ensure a high quality of practice.

To evaluate and promote improvements to practice and policy, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Develop a practice audit process for CYSN, CYMH and Youth Justice
- Begin an aggregate analysis on findings from all audits to date to report out on themes and trends

Goal 3: Develop and strengthen residential care and treatment services

Objective 3.1: Align residential care & treatment services to meet the needs of children and youth in care.

To create a more integrated, accessible and evidence-informed residential care and treatment system of services, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Map the residential system and define the residential service needs of children and youth in care
- Revise and deliver enhanced training for resource workers

Objective 3.2: Strengthen foster care retention and recruitment to provide quality, family-based care for children and youth.

To develop, support and retain a strong and diverse range of caregivers, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Review foster caregiver compensation
- Assess and update foster care policies and implement changes
- Complete foster caregiver forecast model that addresses supply/demand/gaps
- Standardize foster caregiver assessment/approval process
- Revise enhanced foster caregiver training
- Complete an evaluation report on the Caregiver Support Network project

Performance Measure 8: Placement Stability for children in care

Performance Measure	2008/09 Baseline	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Forecast	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Percent of children in "out of home care" for at least two years who experienced no change in placement	54.1%	62.2%	61.2%	62.6%	63.1%	63.6%

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, ICM, and Resource and Payment System.

Discussion

Placement stability is essential for children and youth in care (CYIC) to develop secure attachment to a caregiver (a fundamental determinant of their well-being) and sense of belonging. Some placement

changes are necessary and can be beneficial in terms of ensuring the right fit for the child or youth, but generally avoiding or minimizing moves while in care is an important goal. Evidence shows that CYIC are more stable in placements where foster parents are well trained and supported. A CYIC that has to move is likely to do so either in their first year of care; preventing moves in early in care is key.

In this measure, "out of home care" includes children living with foster parents or with relatives for protection reasons. This measure is the proportion of these children who remain in the same placement for at least two years.

The breakout table below provides more in-depth information about number of moves over a one and two year period. Children and youth in care are more likely to move in their first year of care.

	Did not Move 2013/14	Moved Once 2013/14	Moved 2 or more times 2013/14
Percent of children in "out of home care" for at least two years by # of changes in placement	62.2%	19.6%	18.2%
Percent of children and youth in their first year of care by # of changes in placement	69.3%	22.2%	8.5%

Performance Measure 9: Foster Parent Retention

Performance Measure	2013/14 Baseline	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Forecast	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Proportion of foster parents aged 64 years or younger that continued to foster one year later	76.9%	76.9%	77.0%	77.5%	78.0%	78.5%

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, ICM, and Resource and Payment System.

Discussion

Effective support for foster parents is a significant factor in their decision to continue fostering over time. The effectiveness of this support will be reflected in rates of retention for foster parents from year to year. This new performance measure looks at the proportion of foster parents that are caregiving on March 31st each year that continue to foster one year later.

Objective 3.3: Expand kinship care & out-of-care options.

To better support placement with relatives and other significant adults who have an established relationship with the child or youth or a cultural connection to them, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Complete kinship and out-of-care options review and report
- Update kinship and out-of-care options policy to support use of the options

Objective 3.4: Strengthen the system of services for children and youth with complex care needs.

To provide effective and timely responses to children and youth assessed with complex care needs, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Implement two 4-bed community resources
- Implement trauma informed intervention model throughout the province
- Complete practice guidelines for 'working with children and youth with complex needs' and for 'trauma informed practice'

Goal 4: A Healthy Workplace Where Employees are Engaged and Supported

Objective 4.1: Engage employees in creating a healthy and efficient workplace.

To engage its employees in the creation of a healthy workplace and involve them in developing new, more efficient and effective ways of providing programs and services, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Continue implementation of the Healthy Workplace Action Plan in collaboration with divisional engagement activities
- Embed 'Lean Where You Work'

Objective 4.2: Improve recruitment and retention of front line staff within Service Delivery Division.

To effectively address workload issues for service delivery staff, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Focus on front line social worker recruitment and hard to recruit locations

Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2014/15 Restated Estimates[1]	2015/16 Estimates[2,4]	2016/17 Plan[4]	2017/18 Plan[4]
Operating Expenses ($000)				
Early Years Services[3]	267,611	301,507	301,827	302,268
Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs	284,294	285,460	286,956	289,384
Child and Youth Mental Health Services	78,831	80,141	80,638	81,610
Child Safety, Family Support and Children In Care Services	499,554	501,969	504,573	509,872
Adoption Services	26,563	27,728	27,778	27,881
Youth Justice Services	46,200	44,718	45,146	45,920
Service Delivery Support	117,528	118,429	119,074	119,958
Executive and Support Services	18,625	18,975	19,215	19,314
Total	**1,339,206**	**1,378,927**	**1,385,207**	**1,396,207**
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) ($000)				
Service Delivery Support[5]	1,040	2,379	2,379	2,379
Total	**1,040**	**2,379**	**2,379**	**2,379**

Core Business Area	2014/15 Restated Estimates[1]	2015/16 Estimates[2,4]	2016/17 Plan[4]	2017/18 Plan[4]
Other Financing Transactions ($000)				
Executive and Support Services (Human Services Providers Financing Program)				
Receipts	31	31	31	31
Disbursements	0	0	0	0
Net Cash (Requirements)	31	31	31	31

[1]For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2014/15 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2015/16 Estimates.

[2]Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates.

[3]The ministry has received additional funding for BC Families First Early Years initiatives.

[4]The ministry has received additional funding for Economic Stability Mandate negotiated wage and sector increases.

[5]The ministry has received additional funding for vehicle fleet.

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Hyperlinks to Additional Information

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Ministry's Homepage

Residential Review Project - Final Report

Publicly Reported Performance Measures

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Ombudsperson

Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia

Representative for Children and Youth